

## CLAIMS

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

- 5 1. A method for selecting an agent for a call, comprising:  
determining an off process time for each of a plurality of agents; and  
routing an incoming call to a first available agent in said plurality of  
agents, wherein said first available agents has an off process time that is higher  
than other available agents in said plurality of agents.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said determining an off process time for each  
of a plurality of agents includes determining an off process time for each of a plurality  
of agents after receiving said incoming call.
- 15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said determining an off process time for each  
of a plurality of agents includes determining how much off process time each agent in  
said plurality of agents has had during a time period.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said first available agent has an off process  
20 time higher than all other available agents in said plurality of agents.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
determining that said first available agent has a higher off process time  
than any other available agent in said plurality of agents.
- 25 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
determining that an agent is needed to handle said incoming call.
7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
30 receiving said incoming call.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein an off process time for an agent includes time that said agent has been on hold plus time that said agent has been idle.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

5 skipping a second available agent to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having an off process time that is higher than said first available agent's off process time and said second available agent being one of said plurality of agents.

10 10. The method of claim 1, wherein said determining an off process time for each of a plurality of agents includes determining an off process time only for available agents.

11. A method for selecting an agent for a call, comprising:

15 assigning a priority to each of a plurality of agents; and  
routing an incoming call to a first available agent in said plurality of agents, wherein said first available agents has a priority that is higher than other available agents in said plurality of agents.

20 12. The method of claim 11, determining that said first available agent has a higher priority than any other available agent in said plurality of agents.

13. The method of claim 11, further comprising:

25 skipping a second available agent to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having a priority that is higher than said first available agent's priority and said second available agent being one of said plurality of agents.

14. A method for selecting an agent for a call, comprising:

30 establishing a first group of agents;  
establishing a second group of agents;

routing an incoming call to an available agent in said first group of agents if an available agent exists in said first group of agents or routing said call to an available agent in said second group if no available agents exist in said first group.

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15. The method of 14, further comprising:  
assigning a priority to each agent in said second group of agents.

- 10 16. The method of claim 15, wherein said routing said call to a available agent in said second group if no available agent exists in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said second group having a priority higher than other agents in said second group.

- 15 17. The method of claim 16, further comprising:  
skipping a second available agent in said second group to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having a priority that is higher than said first available agent's priority.

- 20 18. The method of claim 15, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said second group if no available agent exists in said first group includes routing said call to an available agent in said second group having a priority higher than all other available agents in said second group.

- 25 19. The method of 18, further comprising:  
assigning a priority to each agent in said first group of agents.

- 30 20. The method of claim 19, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group having a priority higher than other agents in said first group.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising:

skipping a second available agent in said first group to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having a priority that is higher than said first available agent's priority.

5     22.     The method of claim 19, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to an available agent in said first group having a priority higher than all other available agents in said first group.

23.     The method of claim 18, further comprising:  
10             determining an off process time for each agent in said first group.

24.     The method of claim 23, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group having an off process time higher than other agents in said group.

15     25.     The method of claim 24, further comprising:  
           skipping a second available agent in said first group to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having an off process time that is higher than said first available agent's off process time.

20     26.     The method of claim 23, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group having an off process time higher than all other agents in said group.

25     27.     The method of claim 14, further comprising:  
           assigning a priority to each agent in said first group of agents.

28.     The method of claim 27, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group  
30     having a priority higher than other agents in said first group.

29.     The method of claim 28, further comprising:

skipping a second available agent in said first group to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having a priority that is higher than said first available agent's priority.

5 30. The method of claim 27, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to an available agent in said first group having a priority higher than all other available agents in said first group.

31. The method of claim 28, further comprising:  
10 assigning a priority to each agent in said second group of agents.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said second group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said second group having a priority higher than other agents in said second group.

15 33. The method of claim 32, further comprising:  
skipping a second available agent in said second group to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having a priority that is higher than said first available agent's priority.

20 34. The method of claim 31, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said second group includes routing said call to an available agent in said second group having a priority higher than all other available agents in said second group.

25 35. The method of claim 14, further comprising:  
determining an off process time for each agent in said first group.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group  
30 having an off process time higher than other agents in said first group.

37. The method of claim 36, further comprising:

skipping a second available agent in said first group to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having an off process time that is higher than said first available agent's off process time.

5     38.     The method of claim 35, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group having an off process time higher than all other agents in said first group.

10     39.     The method of claim 14, further comprising:  
determining an off process time ratio for each agent in said first group.

40.     The method of claim 39, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group having an off process time ratio lower than other agents in said first group.

15     41.     The method of claim 40, further comprising:  
skipping a second available agent in said first group to handle said incoming call, said second available agent having an off process time ratio that is lower than said first available agent's off process time ratio.

20     42.     The method of claim 39, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said first group includes routing said call to a first available agent in said first group having an off process time ratio lower than all other agents in said first group.

25     43.     The method of claim 26, further comprising:  
determining a time to answer for said first group.

30     44.     The method of claim 30, wherein said routing said call to an available agent in said second group occurs when said time to answer for said first group exceeds a designated threshold.

45. The method of claim 30, wherein no agent in said first group is available when said time to answer for said first group exceeds a designated threshold.

46. An agent selection system, comprising:

a processor;

a communication port coupled to said processor; and

a storage device coupled to said processor and storing instructions

adapted to be executed by said processor to:

determine an off process time for each of a plurality of agents;

and

route an incoming call to a first available agent in said plurality of agents, wherein said first available agents has an off process time that is higher than other available agents in said plurality of agents.

47. An agent selection system, comprising:

a processor;

a communication port coupled to said processor; and

a storage device coupled to said processor and storing instructions

adapted to be executed by said processor to:

assign a priority to each of a plurality of agents; and

route an incoming call to a first available agent in said plurality of agents, wherein said first available agents has a priority that is higher than other available agents in said plurality of agents.

48. An agent selection system, comprising:

a processor;

a communication port coupled to said processor; and

a storage device coupled to said processor and storing instructions

adapted to be executed by said processor to:

establish a first group of agents;

establish a second group of agents;

route an incoming call to an available agent in said first group of agents if an available agent exists in said first group of agents or routing said call to an available agent in said second group if no available agents exist in said first group.

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49. An article of manufacture, comprising:

a computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause said processor to:

determine an off process time for each of a plurality of agents;

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and

route an incoming call to a first available agent in said plurality of agents, wherein said first available agents has an off process time that is higher than other available agents in said plurality of agents.

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50. An article of manufacture, comprising:

a computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause said processor to:

assign a priority to each of a plurality of agents; and

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route an incoming call to a first available agent in said plurality of agents, wherein said first available agents has a priority that is higher than other available agents in said plurality of agents.

51. An article of manufacture, comprising:

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a computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause said processor to:

establish a first group of agents;

establish a second group of agents;

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route an incoming call to an available agent in said first group of agents if an available agent exists in said first group of agents or routing said call to an available agent in said second group if no available agents exist in said first group.